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**Seven Secrets to Writing a Book that Sells**

**By Penny C. Sansevieri**

**Seven Secrets to Writing a Book that Sells by Penny C. Sansevieri**

It's one thing to write a book, it's an entirely different thing to write one that's a saleable, viable, marketable product. Ensuring the success of a book is something even the biggest publishers have never been able to guarantee. Mitigating circumstances, flash trends, and world events will all affect buyer preferences. That said, there are still ways to leverage the sales-factor in your favor and here's how you do it.

1. Know your readers. We're not just talking about whether your readers are male or female. You'll want to know myriad factors about your audience. How old are your readers (age range)? Are readers married, single, or divorced? Where do your readers live (generally)? What do your readers do for a living? What other books/publications do they read? Develop a profile that includes where they shop, what clubs do they belong to, etc.

These elements will help you incorporate these aspects into your book \*and\* help you unearth salient marketing opportunities (i.e., publications and stores).

2. Know your market. What's the market like for your book? Is there a trend out there you're positioning yourself towards. Are you reading all the publications related to this topic? Are there any "holes" out there your book could fill? What's the future for this market? For example, let's say you're a fiction writer looking to publish chick lit. Go to any bookstore and you can't help but spot the cutesie, pink, cartoonish covers. Many thought this trend was dying out, but it has recently seen another surge. What do you know about trends related to your book topic/audience?

3. Similar books. What else has been published on your topic? Have you read all ten books in your category? If you haven't, you should. You'll want to know everything you can about what's out there and how it's being perceived in the marketplace. It's never a problem having a similar topic. When I published *No More Rejections – Get Published Today*, I knew there were other books out there on marketing. I read them all—then angled my book differently.

## Seven Secrets to Writing a Book that Sells

4. Getting and staying current. What's going on in your industry today? What are some hot buttons? What are people looking for? What's next on the horizon for this topic/audience? If you can't seem to gather this information through traditional channels, why not survey your target audience? There are a number of places to run free surveys, Survey Monkey is one of them: <http://www.surveymonkey.com>

5. Follow the media. What's the media talking about these days (besides the California election & Ben-lo)? Keep track of media buzz—what they're paying attention to and what they're writing about. Delve beyond the front page of your paper to the second or third page and see what's filling the pages. If you can get your hands on out-of-state papers, do a comparative review. Do you see a trend in coverage? Is there something that seems to be getting more buzz even if it's on page six?

6. Talk, teach, listen. One of the best ways I've found to get in touch with my audience was to teach a class and do speaking engagements. When I was putting together my book, *Get Published Today*, I

found that the classes I taught provided valuable information for creating a great book because they put me directly in touch with my audience!

7. Timing is everything. When do you plan to release your tome? Are you releasing around a holiday or anniversary? Could you take advantage of any upcoming event and/or holiday for your book launch?

Penny C. Sansevieri

*The Cliffhanger* was published in June of 2000. After a strategic marketing campaign it quickly climbed the ranks at Amazon.com to the #1 best selling book in San Diego. Her most recent book: *No More Rejections. Get Published Today!* was released in July of 2002 to rave reviews. Penny is a book marketing and media relations specialist. She also coaches authors on projects, manuscripts and marketing plans and instructs a variety of coursing on publishing and promotion. To learn more about her books or her promotional services, you can visit her web site at [www.booksbypen.com](http://www.booksbypen.com). To subscribe to her free ezine, send a blank email to: <mailto:subscribe@booksbypen.com>  
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None

## Secrets We Keep From Those We Love

By Timothy Cole

Everyone keeps a few secrets from a husband or wife, boyfriend and girlfriend. And people keep their secrets for a lot of reasons. Often people are embarrassed or they are fearful of a partner's hostility or possible rejection.

And research shows that it is in one's best interest to keep some things private, especially when partners or spouses are likely to respond poorly to the truth. Being rejected, scorned, or stigmatized does not help any one work through a serious issue.

## Seven Secrets to Writing a Book that Sells

But, keeping secrets can also be harmful.

Keeping secrets often prevents people from dealing with the problem at hand. Keeping secrets leads to increased stress, anxiety, and it often makes people think about the issue (event or topic) more frequently.

For instance, people who have a secret crush on someone often dwell on their feelings more than people who are able to talk about their feelings out in the open. More often than not, keeping something secret makes it seem more important than it really is.

Likewise, revealing secrets is very helpful when it is done right; that is, in a safe, non-judgmental environment. Revealing secrets can reduce stress, it helps people let go of an issue and think about it more clearly.

If a secret is bothering you, it really does help to get it out – as long as people don't respond negatively or use the information against you.

In fact, research shows that the simple task of writing down a secret, even if no one ever reads it, makes people feel better. Writing a secret down reduces stress – it is cathartic.

With this in mind, we have created a place where people can anonymously reveal the secrets they keep. Maybe you will find that letting go of one of your own secrets is helpful and not so embarrassing after all.

Article by Timothy Cole, PhD. Take a look at the secrets people keep from their romantic partners at



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